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June 20, 2003

**OKLAHOMA BULLETIN NO. OK250-3-22**

**SUBJECT: FNM – Web TCAS Definitions**

**Purpose:** To provide guidance to time keeping questions submitted by employees.

**Expiration Date:** September 30, 2003

Employees have submitted questions requesting clarification on how to charge time to specific work related activities. This bulletin provides answers to the questions for improved time keeping efficiency. Further guidance can be found in Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) located at the following web site:

<http://calais.itc.nrcs.usda.gov/IAS2002/>

**1. When we go to another county to receive training, do we charge it to our home county or to the county where we receive the training?**

Charge time to your home county (Official Duty Station - ODS). Unless you are working to provide assistance to a specific client in another county, or working on a specific project that will benefit another county, charge time to your ODS county. FAQ, Miscellaneous (1).

**2. When do we start charging time to programs (EQIP, EWP, etc.)?**

Chief Knight's April 17, 2003, budget allocation letter to states amended the policy on charging planning assistance (step 1 through 7). Planning assistance is to be charged to Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA), except when assisting Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Wetland Reserve Program (WRP), and Watershed Surveys and Planning clients. Time charges to programs, such as: EQIP, WHIP, FRPP, and EWP will be limited to Activity Codes - Communications & Relations, Management & Supervision, and Program Management prior to the signing of the contracts.

**3. Can we charge time to program training?**

Yes. When delivering program training, time would be charged to Activity Code - Program Management. If receiving program training, time will be charged to Management & Supervision (non-technical training). This is clarified in Web TCAS definitions.

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**4. How do we charge time when assisting districts with watershed O&M needs on existing sites?**

If the NRCS employee is assisting sponsors with completing O&M inspections, time would be charged to WF-03 Flood Prevention Operations, or WF-08 Small Watershed Operations, and Activity Code Practice System Maintenance. If the NRCS employee is assisting sponsors with completing O&M repairs, time would be charged to 03 or 08 Program, and Application Assistance Activity Code.

**5. When I click on the plus (+) sign to build new categories in Web TCAS I find two options for counties. The first option does not include counties I provide assistance to. The second option includes two counties that are not in an area I service and should be removed. How do I change my profile to add or delete counties?**

If you want to add a county to your profile, go into Update Profile, click on the + sign above County. The second county box will pop up (below State box), click on the arrow and highlight the county you want to add. Click on the Add button to the immediate right of the county you highlighted and it will be added to your list.

If you want to delete a county from your list, you will first scroll down in the first (upper) county box and highlight the county you want to delete, then click on the - button above and you should be able to delete the county from your list. You can then build specific time codes you want to add to your profile for the pay period. After completing these functions you will need to Save to your Profile.

**6. All non-technical training is to be listed as CTA - Management and supervision and technical training is to be listed as CTA - Training. I have a hard time determining what is technical training and what is non-technical training. When do I charge time to different training purposes?**

As a general rule, technical training should be considered when attending those sessions that help you hone your technical skills. This would include RUSLE, pest management, staking a pond, etc.

Training that would be captured under CTA - Management and Supervision, includes such non-technical things as: receiving Web TCAS, Civil Rights, Ethics, or training subjects that are more administrative in nature.

**7. I have always wondered how I should charge time when I am involved in installations of new software and testing instructions, or even trouble-shooting "general" computer problems, not related to Toolkit. I end up charging it to technology transfer. But it really doesn't come close to the other technical work I do that is technology transfer and training.**

Time should be charged to technology transfer (developing technology models and tools).

**8. What activity code should be used for attending staff meetings?**

Time should be charged to activity - Management & Supervision.

**9. When should time be charged to EWP, after the project is approved or, when developing damage survey reports immediately after the emergency event?**

Time should be charged to EWP when employees begin developing damage survey reports. If the project is not approved, time charges after disapproval should be charged to CTA – General, for any follow up actions.

**10. What should time for attending professional society meetings be charged to if an employee is on government time, CTA - General or CTA - Grazing Lands?**

Time should be charged to the program benefiting. If the purpose of the society meeting centers around grazing lands, CTA - Grazing Lands should be charged, otherwise CTA - General.

**11. I think we need clarity on when to charge time to the RC&D program. Should DC's charge time for attending council meetings or when they meet with coordinators to discuss projects? Should work by a coordinator be charged to the county where the project work occurs or can it be charged to a RC&D Area?**

DC's attending council meetings will charge time to CTA - General (FAQ - Programs - 20).

Time spent by DC's discussing projects should be charged to RC&D if the project is funded by RC&D funds. If the projects are not funded by RC&D program funds (and most projects are not), charge time to CTA - General (Frequently Asked Questions - Programs 6).

Coordinators working on projects that are specific to a county should be charged to that county. If the project is broad, (such as an area wide project) time should be charged to the official duty station.

**12. In a review of Web TCAS reporting, I observed that some employees are using the activity code "Management and Supervision." Is that activity code used by all employees, or does it only apply to state program managers?**

Activity code "Management and Supervision" is for use by all employees. It captures time-spent timekeeping, staff meetings, performance reviews, business plan development and update, non-technical training, etc. However, it should not be used as a catchall. Employees need to utilize activity codes that support the activities they are carrying out.

/s/ (Kevin D. Norton – Acting for)

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